

**To:** Sarah Jacobson[Sarah.Jacobson@co.laplata.co.us]  
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**From:** Lewandowski - DNR, Joe  
**Sent:** Wed 8/12/2015 10:38:00 PM  
**Subject:** Re: Proposed Draft news release - please let me know comments.

Looks good, Sarah.

**Joe Lewandowski**  
Public Information Officer, southwest region

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On Wed, Aug 12, 2015 at 4:18 PM, Sarah Jacobson <[Sarah.Jacobson@co.laplata.co.us](mailto:Sarah.Jacobson@co.laplata.co.us)> wrote:

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For additional information:  
2015

August 12,

Please contact the Joint Information Center at 970-812-3351  
4:45 p.m.

## Update on Local Response to Gold King Mine

## **Impact to La Plata County**

Durango, CO –La Plata County, San Juan Basin Health Department and City of Durango are assisting the EPA in water well sampling by staffing the call center and assisting with GIS mapping of properties. There were a total of 54 residential water well samples taken through yesterday and a total of 24 private water wells will be sampled today. Individual well owners will be contacted directly as their results are completed, to be followed by written correspondence with validated results.

EPA technicians took 19 sediment samples yesterday and mailed 11 of those samples for testing yesterday and 8 will be mailed to labs today. The samples from yesterday mailed today were taken after the shipping deadline.

This evening, EPA officials will work with La Plata County Director of Emergency Management Butch Knowlton and ditch management companies to flush out the irrigation ditches as steps toward opening irrigation for farmers and ranchers who depend on Animas River water for their crops and livestock. “I expect to see very little change in color of the Animas River as a result of the ditch flushing,” said Knowlton.

Butch Knowlton has requested additional involvement from veterinary science experts from national, state, and local levels to help address concerns that residents have expressed about their livestock. Topics to be addressed are concerns surrounding animals drinking from contaminated irrigation ditches, canals and the river.

EPA launched a new website for the incident at <http://www2.epa.gov/goldkingmine>. CDPHE also has a webpage for the incident at <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/animas-river-spill>.

Incident information is also posted to the La Plata County website at <http://www.co.laplatco.us/emergency>, San Juan Basin Health Department’s Website at [www.sjbhd.org](http://www.sjbhd.org), [www.facebook.com/LaPlataCounty](http://www.facebook.com/LaPlataCounty) and [https://www.facebook.com/sanjuanbasinhealth](http://www.facebook.com/sanjuanbasinhealth). La Plata County has set up a call center for questions from citizens at [970-385-8700](tel:970-385-8700).

